



HEALTHY TODAY

www.communityhealthdayton.org

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WHOLE GRAINS: FROM A (AMARANTH) TO W (WHEAT)

Whole grains are an essential part of a healthy diet. Here's the dish on these mighty morsels.

- ⇒ **Are you eating enough whole grains?** Chances are you may not be—MyPlate, the most recent nutrition guide released by the USDA, recommends six 1-ounce servings of grains each day. Most importantly, at least half of these servings need to be whole grains.
- ⇒ If you think that consuming grains means a carb-overload, worry not. Whole grains fall into the “good” carb category along with fruits, veggies, and legumes.
- ⇒ An archeological finding evidenced that humans have relied on grain as a staple crop for least 100,000 years. But just what are whole grains? Grains are the edible seeds of plants. A grain is a “whole grain” if it contains the three key parts of a seed: the bran, germ, and endosperm.
- ⇒ In effect, all grains start as whole grains, but they don't all end up on the shelf as such. Key parts of the seeds are stripped away during milling, a manufacturing process that increases the shelf life of products such as flour. Unfortunately, most of the essential nutrients are lost in this process. Consuming whole grains is the only way that you can be 100% sure you're getting the most bang for your buck nutritionally. Whole grains abound with heart-healthy soluble fiber that controls appetite while regulating blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

<https://www.cookinglight.com/nutrition-101/essential-whole-grain-foods-you-need-your-diet>



Healthy Today is Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton's informational newsletter on healthy living, created with the goal of helping you and your family stay healthy and thriving every day! To read more Healthy Today articles, please visit the archives on our website:

www.communityhealthdayton.org/healthyat80

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DECODING WHOLE GRAIN FOOD LABELS

Walk through any supermarket and you'll find an array of whole-grain claims on packages. But how can you tell if a product is really a whole-grain food? We've done the homework for you, and we've learned to always focus on the ingredient list, and not on the often-confusing health claims on the front of the package.

We've selected some common products—crackers, chips, popcorn, cereal, baking mixes, breads, and more—and evaluated whether they're a whole-grain food or not. Our explanations for each will help you to evaluate some of your favorite products yourself to see if they pass the whole-grains test.

- ◆ **Wheat crackers** ~ YES, if they are made with whole-grain wheat flour as the starting ingredient. Watch the sodium levels, which will creep up if you enjoy more than a serving of crispy, salty crackers.
- ◆ **Buttery snack crackers** ~ NO. The word “whole” is deceiving on many brands of buttery snack crackers, which are actually made from enriched flour. Labeled as Whole Wheat and made with 5 grams of whole grains, whole-grain wheat flour is half way down the ingredients, followed by partially hydrogenated oil (a source of trans fat). You'd have to eat over 200 calories and 360 mg sodium (and likely a few grams of trans fats) to reach a full serving of whole grains. .
- ◆ **Rye crispbread** ~ YES. This type of 100% whole-grain cracker is hard to identify without any type of a front-of-label stamp of approval. Three simple ingredients like Whole-grain rye flour, sesame seeds, and salt make this type of cracker an excellent source for whole grains. Choose whole grains with fewer ingredients for more natural, authentic goodness.
- ◆ **Cheese baked crackers** ~ NO. Cheese crackers are typically made from unbleached enriched flour. While whole-grain wheat flour may come in at a close second on the ingredient list, cheese crackers usually only have 5 grams of whole grains per serving, and quite a lengthy list of ingredients.
- ◆ **Stone-ground corn tortilla chips** ~ YES. With whole corn as the first ingredient, this salty snack can offer half a serving of whole grains (8 grams) per 1 ounce. While these tempting chips are able to call themselves whole, with at least 51% of these grains coming from whole grain, there are often only 6 chips in a serving, which can add up fast, along with the calories and sodium.

TAKE TWO: ENGLISH MUFFIN VS. BAGEL

While similar in fat, iron, and sodium, whole wheat English muffins and bagels offer more zinc, magnesium, and vitamin E than their refined counterparts.

For comparison's sake, even when downsized to a half, the dense and chewy bagel packs about 40 more calories per serving than an entire muffin, but it provides a bit more fiber and protein, which help you feel full.

- **100% Whole Wheat English Muffin**
(2 ounces)
115 calories
1 gram fat
5 grams protein
4 grams fiber
268 milligrams sodium
- **100% Whole Wheat Bagel**
(2 ounces, half a bagel)
155 calories
1 gram fat
7 grams protein
5 grams fiber
269 milligrams sodium

<https://www.cookinglight.com/eating-smart/smart-choices/take-two-whole-wheat-english-muffin-whole-wheat-bagel>



TAKE TWO: WHOLE WHEAT BREAD & WHOLE WHEAT PITA

Either of these options can serve as a nutritional base for sandwiches—particularly when they are made with 100 percent whole wheat.

Typically, two slices of whole wheat bread contain fewer calories and a bit more fiber than one whole wheat pita, which has less sodium. Both count as up to two of your three recommended daily servings of whole grain.

- **100% Whole Wheat Bread**
(2 slices; 56 grams)
120 calories
250 milligrams sodium
4 grams fiber
- **100% Whole Wheat Pita**
(1 pita; 55 grams)
140 calories
130 milligrams sodium
3 grams fiber .

<https://www.cookinglight.com/eating-smart/smart-choices/take-two-whole-wheat-bread-whole-wheat-pita>



NUTRITION BITES!

Health Benefits of Whole Grains: While all whole grains are superstars, many pack unique characteristics and health benefits not found in other grains. Here are nine that truly shine.

- ⇒ **Bulgar** ~ Most often seen as the key ingredient of the Middle Eastern staple tabbouleh, bulgur is a type of wheat that needs only a few minutes to cook. It also contains the most fiber out of any grain.
- ⇒ **Rice** ~ This extremely versatile grain is widely available, inexpensive, and gluten-free. Opt for brown rice, which is made from whole grains, and avoid white rice, which is made with refined grains.
- ⇒ **Corn** ~ Often categorized as a vegetable, corn is actually a grain. While it may attract skepticism because of its use in unhealthy products such as high fructose corn syrup, corn in its purest form is packed with antioxidants. Look for it in an assortment of colors—yellow, white, blue, and even purple—and eat it straight from the cob or toast the kernels for popcorn.
- ⇒ **Oats** ~ a staple breakfast food guaranteed to be whole grain even if they are quick-cooking. While all grains are high in fiber, oatmeal contains a special variety called beta-glucan that's especially powerful in lowering cholesterol.
- ⇒ **Farro** ~ This light-brown colored, medium-sized ancient grain is a type of wheat and is similar in appearance, texture, and taste to wheat berries. Restaurant chefs especially prize farro for its delightfully chewy texture and sweet taste.
- ⇒ **Teff** ~ Don't let the small size fool you—this gluten-free ancient grain packs massive health perks. Teff, a type of millet, has significantly more calcium and iron than other grains. Its small size makes it ideal for baking into energy bars and breads.
- ⇒ **Sorghum** ~ Cooked sorghum has a chewy texture similar to Israeli couscous, while popped sorghum is a pint-sized version of popcorn. Sorghum flour is also used in gluten-free baking.
- ⇒ **Quinoa** ~ Quick-cooking, gluten-free, and available in a range of colors from white to red, quinoa is a protein powerhouse. This ancient grain is a complete protein, meaning it contains all nine essential amino acids. Quinoa is also popular for its mild flavor, subtle chewiness, and versatility.
- ⇒ **Buckwheat** ~ Don't be misled by the name—buckwheat is actually gluten-free. However, its seeds are carbohydrate-rich and lend themselves to the same uses as wheat. Use buckwheat flour as a base for pancake and waffle mixes or whole buckwheat for salads or soups.

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Delicious & Nutritious

CREAMY PUMPKIN SAUCE

This creamy pasta sauce is shared by www.jenreviews.com. While Japanese pumpkin is the perfect size for this, feel free to use a quarter of a large pumpkin.

- 1 Japanese pumpkin
 - Coarse salt
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 1 medium onion
 - 4 garlic cloves
 - ½ teaspoon coarse salt
 - 2 cups milk
 - Salt and black pepper to taste
 - Whole Wheat Pasta, cooked according to package directions
- ⇒ Preheat the oven to 400F.
- ⇒ On a cutting board, cut the pumpkin in half and scoop out the seeds and stringy insides, discarding the insides and seeds. Put the pumpkin, cut side up, inside an oven safe dish and sprinkle with coarse salt.
- ⇒ Put the pumpkin in the oven and allow it to roast 30-40 minutes or until a fork can easily slide into the flesh.
- ⇒ Remove the pumpkin from the oven and allow it to cool about 5-10 minutes. Using a fork, scrape the orange flesh from the skin and discard the skin. Roughly chop the onion and smash the garlic cloves on a cutting board.
- ⇒ Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic to the pan and cook about 3 minutes, or until they are just starting to turn brown. Add the pumpkin to the pan and stir to combine and cook 5-7 minutes; the pumpkin should be starting to cook down into a paste like consistency. Pour the milk into the pan a little bit at a time, stirring constantly. Allow it come to a simmer, reduce the heat to medium-low and let it cook about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent it from sticking.
- ⇒ Turn off the heat and pour the sauce into a vessel to blend to it into a smooth, thick liquid. Pour it back into the sauté pan.
- ⇒ Add the cooked spaghetti to the pan and toss it with the sauce to coat all of the noodles. Cover and set aside. Season it with salt and black pepper to taste.

<https://www.jenreviews.com/spaghetti-recipe/>

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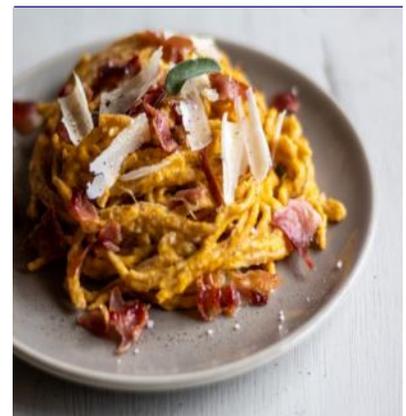
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